United Nations S/PV.3824

Security Council
Fifty-second Year

Provisional

3824th Meeting
Monday, 20 October 1997, 11.40 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Somavía	(Chile)
Members:	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Costa Rica	Mr. Sáenz Biolley
	Egypt	Mr. Abdel Aziz
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Guinea-Bissau	Mr. Cabral
	Japan	Mr. Konishi
	Kenya	Mr. Rana
	Poland	Mr. Wlosowicz
	Portugal	Mr. Soares
	Republic of Korea	Mr. Yung Woo Chun
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Sweden	Mr. Dahlgren
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir John Weston
	United States of America	Mr. Richardson

Agenda

The situation in Croatia

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (S/1997/767)

97-86266 (E)

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, *within one week of the date of publication*, to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178.

The meeting was called to order at 11.40 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Croatia

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (S/1997/767)

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Croatia, Germany and Italy, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Šimonović (Croatia) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Henze (Germany) and Mr. Fulci (Italy) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*interpretation from Spanish*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium, contained in document S/1997/767.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to documents S/1997/745 and S/1997/772, which contain the text of the letters dated 24 September and 3 October 1997, respectively, from the Permanent Representative of Croatia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the report of the Secretary-General of 2 October 1997 (S/1997/767), on the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES), and agrees with its balanced and objective assessment.

"The Security Council notes with approval several positive actions taken by the Government of Croatia which are contained in the report, as well as those which have occurred since the report was issued. These developments include the recent agreements relating to education, progress on the reintegration of the judiciary, the law on convalidation, moves towards recognition of pensioner service, assistance to local governments and municipalities, and provision to UNTAES of documentation on 25 war crimes cases. The Council is also encouraged by the increased cooperation with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. The Council expects the Government of Croatia to continue to build upon these positive steps and accelerate its efforts in order fully to complete these initiatives.

"The Security Council welcomes the recent establishment by the Government of Croatia of a programme for national reconciliation. A final assessment of this programme must await its full and prompt implementation.

"The Security Council continues to note with concern that there are still many outstanding areas and issues of contention and non-compliance, which require further, urgent action from the Government of Croatia. The Council reiterates its call to the Government of Croatia to curb media attacks on ethnic groups. The Council also underlines, in particular, the importance of the removal of all legal and administrative barriers, thus allowing the accelerated voluntary two-way return of displaced persons, including their right to choose to live in the region, as well as the return of refugees. It calls upon the Government of Croatia to give immediate effect to recent decisions of the Constitutional Court regarding the Law on the Temporary Takeover and Administration of Specified Property, and to take further action to promote the safe return of owners to their homes and the resolution of the issue of lost tenancy rights, including ensuring access to reconstruction assistance.

"Much progress in these and other outstanding areas must be made on an urgent basis, in order for the Government of Croatia to comply fully with its obligations and create the conditions for a successful completion of UNTAES. For its part, the local Serb population must also take more active measures to participate in the reintegration process.

"The Security Council notes the urgent need for all local government bodies in the region, particularly the City Council of Vukovar, to commence full normal functions immediately.

"The Security Council expresses its concern about the behaviour of some officers of the Transitional Police Force, and urges full cooperation with UNTAES in improving the performance of this Force. The Council approves the intention of the Secretary-General to retain United Nations civilian police and military observers at current levels to the end of the UNTAES mandate. The Council also notes the need to address concerns relating to the continuation of police monitoring functions.

"The Security Council welcomes the close cooperation between UNTAES and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in expanding the long-term mission of the OSCE in Croatia.

"The Security Council shares the assessment of the Secretary-General that there is sufficient time for Croatia to comply fully with its obligations and commitments before 15 January 1998 and urges the Government of Croatia to redouble its efforts in the time remaining. The Council looks forward to the next report of the Secretary-General on all aspects relevant to the peaceful reintegration of the region, due by the beginning of December."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/1997/48.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.